



Best Practices to Prevent COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses

For the latest version of this guidance, please check
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/reopening-la.htm>

On June 15, all capacity limits and distancing requirements were lifted in California, and most businesses are able to return to full operations. Los Angeles County joined the state in lifting most COVID-19 restrictions. The risk of COVID-19 is still present, especially for those who are not fully vaccinated against the virus.

Even as businesses resume full operations, COVID-19 continues to pose a risk to communities, and it is important for employers to continue to take steps to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission among their workers and customers.

Below is a summary of best practices for employers to keep their workers, customers, and communities safe from COVID-19. In addition to this information, remember:

- Employers who fall under the scope of the [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS) must remain in compliance with these Standards.

Prevent and reduce transmission from and among customers/visitors

- ✓ **Follow face mask rules for the public:** [State Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) for the public changed, effective June 15, 2021. The purpose of continued masking is to prevent transmission to persons with higher risk of infection (e.g., unvaccinated or immunocompromised persons), to persons with prolonged, cumulative exposures (e.g., workers), or to persons whose vaccination status is unknown.
- ✓ **In alignment with the CDC recommendations, everyone must continue to wear a mask, regardless of their vaccination status, in a limited number of places,** such as public transit/transportation hubs, schools, health care settings, detention facilities, shelters, and cooling centers. In addition, people who are not fully vaccinated, including everyone from 2 to 11 years old, must continue to wear masks in all indoor public settings and are recommended to wear masks in outdoor public settings if physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- ✓ **Ensure that customers/visitors who are not fully vaccinated wear a face mask while in any indoor sites and businesses.** Unless you are able to verify the vaccination status of customers, continue to [have customers bring and wear masks](#) when they are indoors, regardless of vaccination status.
- ✓ **Use your online outlets and signage at the entry to your business** to explain your business's COVID-19 policies, including the masking requirements on your premises and the message that visitors should not enter the premises if sick. You can continue to require masks for all customers to reduce the risk for your workers and other customers.

Prevent and reduce transmission among employees

- ✓ **Encourage vaccination:** COVID-19 vaccines are [safe and effective](#) and are the best way to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks in the workplace and in the community. COVID-19 vaccine is [widely available](#) now in every community. Offer employees paid time off to get vaccinated and consider offering a [vaccination clinic](#) at your workplace to make it more convenient for your employees to get vaccinated. Consider opportunities to incentivize your employees to get vaccinated or to make it easier



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to get vaccinated. This might include offering rewards such as paid time off or cash bonus payments, and/or policies that are more relaxed for employees who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

- ✓ **Follow face mask rules for employees:** [Cal/OSHA face mask requirements](#) for employees vary by sector, although at a minimum, all employees who are not fully vaccinated are required to wear a face mask when indoors at workplaces and in vehicles, unless they are alone or while eating or drinking at least six feet apart from others. Face masks help prevent workers who do not know they have the virus that causes COVID-19 from spreading it to others and they provide protection to the wearer as well. Offer employees who are not vaccinated respirators which offer more protection for the wearer than cloth face masks or surgical masks. Employees who work in a setting where they are in close contact with other people who may not be fully vaccinated should be provided a higher level of protection, such as wearing two masks (“double-masking”) or a respirator (e.g., KN95 or N95). This is particularly important if the employee is not fully vaccinated and is in an indoor or crowded outdoor setting. For more general information about masks, see LAC DPH mask webpage at <http://ph.lacounty.gov/masks>.
- ✓ **Actively encourage and support symptomatic, infected, or exposed employees to stay home:**
 - ✓ Make sure employees know that they should not come to work if sick, or if they are under isolation or quarantine orders.
 - ✓ Continue to educate employees about the [symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if they are sick](#). Make sure persons with COVID-19 follow [self-isolation](#) instructions. Workers who are not fully vaccinated and are close contacts to a case must [quarantine](#).
 - ✓ Consider using [signage](#) or daily [screening](#) to reinforce the message that employees who have COVID-19 symptoms and those who are under isolation or quarantine orders should not enter the workplace.
 - ✓ Manage COVID-19 exposures in the workplace when it is learned that an employee is infected by readily identifying and informing exposed contacts as soon as possible. Have a plan to offer testing to employees who may have been exposed to COVID-19 at work. Refer to [Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace](#) for more information.
 - ✓ Comply with reporting requirements if your workplace has a cluster of 3 or more cases of COVID-19 among workers within the span of 14 days. Contact the Department of Public Health at www.redcap.link/covidreport or by calling 888-397-3993 or 213-240-7821.

Maintain a healthy work environment

- ✓ **Increase ventilation:** Effective [ventilation](#) is one of the most important ways to control small aerosol transmission. Make sure your building’s HVAC system is in good, working order. Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building’s air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in all working areas. When weather and working conditions allow, increase fresh outdoor air by opening windows and doors. Consider using fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows. Decrease occupancy in areas where outdoor ventilation cannot be increased.
- ✓ **Ensure water system safety:** To minimize the risk of Legionnaire’s disease and other diseases associated with water, take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown. This includes proper flushing and may require additional cleaning steps (including disinfection). Follow the CDC [Guidance for](#)

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[Building Water Systems](#), which describes the 8 steps you should take before reopening your business or building.

- ✓ **Support hand hygiene:** Provide handwashing facilities for employees and ensure that they have adequate time to wash their hands during work time. Encourage employees to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds each time. Hand sanitizer should contain at least 60% alcohol. Do not provide hand sanitizers with methyl alcohol. See the CDC guidance, [When and How to Wash Your Hands](#).
- ✓ **Cleaning and disinfection:** Worksites should consult [CDC cleaning guidance](#) to help determine how frequently their facility needs to be cleaned and/or disinfected. Cleaning once a day is usually enough. Employers should identify and regularly clean frequently touched surfaces and objects such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, tools, handrails, phones, headsets, bathroom surfaces and steering wheels. Any materials, areas, equipment or objects used by a COVID-19 case during the high-risk exposure period must be disinfected and may not be used by another employee for 24 hours after disinfection.

Maintain healthy business operations

- ✓ **Reinforce paid leave policies:** Review your workplace leave policies and modify them to ensure that employees are not penalized when they stay home due to illness. Make sure that your employees are aware that they may be eligible for benefits such as [paid sick leave](#) or workers' compensation if they become sick with COVID-19, are caring for someone with COVID-19, or if they need to quarantine due to exposure. Workers may also be eligible for paid leave to go to COVID-19 vaccination appointments or to recover from symptoms after getting their vaccination.
- ✓ **Protect employees who are at higher risk of severe illness:** Offer telework options for those at [higher risk](#) who are not fully vaccinated, or consider assigning duties or implementing safety modifications that minimize the employee's contact with customers and other employees.
- ✓ **Make meals and break times safer:**
 - ✓ Encourage employees to eat outdoors or alone in a closed office unless everyone is fully vaccinated.
 - ✓ Stagger employee break times so fewer employees are using lunch or breakrooms at a time.
 - ✓ Reconfigure break rooms to enable employees to maintain physical distancing while eating.
 - ✓ Place signage to remind staff about safe meals and breakrooms, including occupancy limits.

Signage

Signage is available on masks, handwashing and staying away if you are sick and can be found on webpage at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/bestpractices/#signage>.